

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to bid farewell and to express my gratitude to Senator MEL MARTINEZ as he retires from service in the U.S. Senate. During his time here, he established an admirable reputation for hard work, dedication to his State and our Nation, and a commitment to principles.

I have had the privilege of working with Senator MARTINEZ as a member of the Armed Services Committee and its Seapower Subcommittee. In addition, we worked together on the Special Committee on Aging, where he has served as ranking member.

Working with Senator MARTINEZ has always been rewarding. This has been especially true on the Armed Services Committee, where he brings to bear on defense issues both detailed knowledge and long-range vision. On the Seapower Subcommittee, he has been a strong ally in keeping our Navy pre-eminent and has been a highly effective advocate for continuing the DDG-1000 program, the next generation of destroyers.

Senator MARTINEZ's work on the Special Committee on Aging continued his long record of shaping policies important to seniors in Florida and throughout America. From local government to his service as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and in the Senate, he has been a strong voice for ensuring that all Americans live longer, healthier, and more productive lives.

But the greatest legacy MEL MARTINEZ leaves the Senate is his inspiring life story. Born in Cuba, he arrived in America at age 15. He earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Florida State University, and went on to practice law for 25 years. He demonstrates the highest qualities of our nation of immigrants, of the opportunities America provides, and of the character and determination of those who come to our shores. His desire to continue to work for expanded freedoms to the people of Cuba exemplifies his character and principles. I join my colleagues in wishing him and his family well, and in looking forward to many more contributions to the public good from this man of many gifts and accomplishments.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize and thank my colleague and friend from Florida, MEL MARTINEZ, for his service to this country and to wish him luck in the years to come. I am proud and humbled to have had the chance to work with MEL over the last few years on some of the most difficult and trying issues of our time and I will miss his honesty, heart and dedication when he leaves the Senate this week.

While many of my Senate colleagues are familiar with MEL's inspiring personal story I feel that it is important for the American people to know that MEL MARTINEZ's life has personified the American dream and teaches us what we can all accomplish through

hard work, a love of God and country and true dedication to a higher cause. MEL came to the U.S. in the 1960s as a young Cuban immigrant and became the first Cuban-American to serve in a Presidential Cabinet, as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and then the first Cuban-American U.S. Senator.

As a freshman Senator, MEL didn't shy away from the tough issues—he did not sit back and let others tackle the tough, controversial tasks—he dove in head first. Personally, the most memorable example of MEL's courageous work is his support of comprehensive immigration reform.

The 2006 and 2007 immigration debates were difficult times in the U.S. Senate. We had both political parties and an American public divided on an issue that I still believe will define the future of our country for generations to come. For many, it would have been tempting to sit on the sidelines, take the safe votes, keep your head down and just wait for this one to pass, but not MEL MARTINEZ. He took his strong personal convictions and put them in to action. We spent many hours together, working in a bipartisan fashion to try to reach an agreement that could be acceptable to both sides of the aisle and ensure the security of our Nation. Every day, MEL MARTINEZ was in the trenches, on the floor, working to improve the bill, working to reach a bipartisan compromise and working for a better future for our country and our children.

I also had the pleasure of traveling with MEL to the Republic of Georgia where he met with Georgian leaders and spoke openly about the importance of United States support for freedom in all countries, both those distant and close to our shores. MEL spoke with conviction due to his early childhood spent in a country controlled by a repressive dictator.

Many in this Chamber will fondly recall MEL's leadership in the Senate and his work for the State of Florida. I will remember my friend, his courageous leadership on the tough issues and his willingness to put the future of our Nation before his own self interest.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT OF 2009

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1023, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1023) to establish a nonprofit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States.

Pending:

Reid (for Dorgan/Rockefeller) amendment No. 1347, of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 1348 (to amendment No. 1347), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 1349 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1347), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 1350 (to amendment No. 1349), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this legislation is now in the 30 hours postcloture period. We had a cloture vote late yesterday afternoon, and I believe the 30 hours postcloture will expire sometime later this afternoon, at 4 o'clock or 4:30 or so.

Let me again explain what we are trying to do in this legislation. This is reasonably simple. In all of the partisan dust that is created in this country, I think this is one of the few pieces of legislation that has broad bipartisan support. We have, I believe, 53 cosponsors for this bill—Republicans and Democrats—and the proposition is very simple.

First of all, we have lost a lot of jobs in this country. We are in the deepest recession since the Great Depression, and a whole lot of folks have lost their jobs. This is a bill to try to create more jobs. But it is a bill that especially addresses a problem that has been created in the last 8 or 9 years.

Since the year 2000, here are a couple numbers. Since the year 2000, there are 56 million more people living on this planet who are taking international trips. Let me say that again. This is a big planet with billions of people living on it. By the way, half of them have never made a phone call. Half live on less than \$2 a day. But on this big planet there are people who travel internationally, and there are 56 million more international travelers right now than there were 9 years ago. But there are 633,000 fewer international travelers visiting the United States than visited our country 9 years ago.

Why is that the case? And why is it important? Well, it is important for a number of reasons. It is important because international travelers—I am talking about overseas travelers—on average spend about \$4,500 per person per trip. Their travel supports a lot of jobs in the tourism industry. It supports jobs in every State in our country. So it is important for that reason—it creates jobs.

But it is important for another reason as well. When people come here from other parts of the world and see America and experience the culture and the character of our country, they leave, almost inevitably, with a very positive impression of this country of ours.

So for two reasons this is important. We have fewer international visitors—633,000 fewer—per year than we had 9 years ago, even at a time when 56 million more people are traveling around the globe for overseas visits.

I described yesterday what other countries are doing. Other countries